

**For Immediate Release
June 1, 2015**

**Aquila Theatre Presents
A special National Endowment for the Humanities performance event
A FEMALE PHILOCTETES
Part of You|Stories: Ancient and Modern Narratives of War
at John Jay Homestead
June 13, 2015 at 6:00**

(New York, NY) - The Aquila Theatre Company is proud to announce that You|Stories, the national program that uses arts and humanities to explore the ancient and modern narratives of war, will present scenes from A Female Philoctetes, performed by America combat veterans and Aquila artists, and moderated by Professor Peter Meineck of New York University at John Jay Homestead on June 13, 2015. The performance will be accompanied by a veteran/audience discussion. Here, veterans will add their particular insights into this ancient work while sharing their experiences of being at war and coming home, with an emphasis on the experience of women at war. A Female Philoctetes will begin at 6:00 and refreshments will be provided. Tickets are free but since seating is limited, reservations are required. Please call Friends of John Jay Homestead at 914-232-8119 to reserve a seat.

You|Stories is part of a large American national public program that has visited over 120 towns in 34 states reaching over 120,000 people. In 2012, Aquila was invited to perform at the White House to highlight veterans' issues and has been invited to return to Capitol Hill to perform scenes from A Female Philoctetes this June and will perform again on June 6th at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. This event at John Jay Homestead on June 13 will be the first appearance of this special program in Westchester County.

You|Stories is funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. In addition to performances, staged readings, film and reading groups, public talks and special events, the program also includes a specially developed app and web platform (www.youstories.com) designed to allow people to upload their own video stories to be archived at the Library of Congress. This innovative app was just given the Award of Distinction in the 21st Annual Communicator Awards.

Aquila Theatre is a 24 year-old professional theatre company based in New York. Originally founded in London in 1991, Aquila moved to New York in 1999 and has gone on to become the foremost producer of touring classical theatre in the US and a major force in innovative national public programming, using classical material to address important social issues. Aquila's work has been staged for the President and First Lady of the United States at the White House, for members of the US Supreme Court, The National Council on the Arts, at Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, and at hundreds of theatres, museums, libraries and colleges throughout the United States, Canada and Europe.

In this project, Aquila will place a special focus on women veterans by reading Sophocles' play Philoctetes (translated by Peter Meineck - Hackett Publishing 2012) from a female perspective. While on a mission, Philoctetes is inflicted with an incurable and insufferable injury. The

soldier's comrades cannot bear to hear the cries of pain or the sight of the wound. They maroon the injured soldier, sailing away and forgetting him, that is until ten years later when they learn that the war cannot be ended without Philoctetes' help. Sophocles tells the story of how the young son of Achilles must choose between the enigmatic and resolute Philoctetes or the machinations of the wily Odysseus. Philoctetes captures a reality for many combat veterans who have faced such moral and ethical dilemmas or have been physically or mentally wounded, and these issues are as relevant today as they were to the Greeks 2,500 years ago.

Scenes from A Female Philoctetes is based on Aquila's production of the play performed at the Brooklyn Academy of Music to sold out audiences in April 2014, adapted and directed by Desiree Sanchez, Artistic Director of Aquila Theatre.

Tickets for A Female Philoctetes can be reserved by calling Friends of John Jay Homestead at: 914-232-8119.

For more information on:

Aquila Theatre, visit AquilaTheatre.com or call 914-401-9494.

YouStories, visit YouStories.com or call 914-401-9494.

John Jay Homestead, visit <http://www.johnjayhomestead.org/> or call 914-232-5651

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